

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

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This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Original) A pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus for measuring size distribution of pores or particles existing within a porous insulator film formed on a surface of a substrate, comprising:

X-ray generating means for irradiating the insulator film with X-rays from the insulator film's surface side at an incident angle which is set to be larger than a total-reflection critical angle of the insulator film but less than 1.3 times a total-reflection critical angle of the substance; and

X-ray detecting means for detecting among reflection components reflected on the surface of the substrate of the X-rays which have been emitted from the X-ray generating means and entered the insulator film, reflection components exiting from the insulator film after entering the pore or particle and scattering, having an exit angle larger than that of reflection components which exit from the insulator film without entering the pore or particle.

2. (Original) The pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus of claim 1, wherein the X-ray generating

means is provided with:

a linear focus X-ray tube; and

X-ray component selection means for allowing, of X-rays emitted from the X-ray tube, a parallel light flux composed of mutually-parallel components of specific direction lying in a specific wavelength band to enter the measurement target object at the predetermined incident angle,

and that the X-ray detecting means is provided with:

a slit for passing therethrough only a specific-direction component of the X-rays coming from the measurement target object,; and

a position-sensitive X-ray detector for detecting the X-rays having passed through the slit.

3. (Original) The pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus of claim 1, wherein the X-ray generating means is provided with:

a point focus X-ray tube; and

X-ray component selection means for allowing, of X-rays emitted from the X-ray tube, an X-ray beam composed of specific-direction components which are mutually parallel and exist in a specific wavelength band to enter the measurement target object at the predetermined incident angle,

and that the X-ray detecting means is provided with a position-sensitive X-ray detector for detecting the X-rays coming from the

measurement target object.

4. (Currently Amended) The pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus of claim 2-~~or~~3, wherein the X-ray detecting means is provided with a reflection X-ray blocking plate for preventing a specific specular reflection component from entering a detection surface of the position-sensitive X-ray detector, the specular reflection component being derived from the X-rays which are reflected on the surface of the substrate after having entered the insulator film and exit from the insulator film without entering the pore or particle.

5. (Original) The pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus of claim 1, wherein the X-ray generating means is provided with:

an X-ray generating source; and

X-ray converging means for allowing convergence and incidence of X-rays generated from the X-ray generating source onto the measurement target object at the predetermined incident angle,

and that the X-ray detecting means is provided with a position-sensitive X-ray detector.

6. (Original) The pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus of claim 5, wherein the X-ray generating means is provided with an X-ray irradiation range regulatory plate that is arranged immediately above a position of incidence for the X-

rays on the measurement target object at a predetermined spacing.

7. (Original) A pore- or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus for measuring size distribution of pores or particles existing within a porous insulator film formed on a surface of a substrate, comprising:

a point focus X-ray source for irradiating X-rays from the insulator film's surface side at an incident angle set to be larger than a total-reflection critical angle of an uppermost surface layer; and

a two-dimensional position-sensitive detector for detecting scattered X-rays.

8. (New) The pore or particle-size distribution measurement apparatus of claim 3, wherein the X-ray detecting means is provided with a reflection X-ray blocking plate for preventing a specific specular reflection component from entering a detection surface of the position-sensitive X-ray detector, the specular reflection component being derived from the X-rays which are reflected on the surface of the substrate after having entered the insulator film and exit from the insulator film without entering the pore or particle.